

VZCZCXRO2629
OO RUEHAST RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHLH RUEHNEH RUEHPW
DE RUEHKA #1276 3451004
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 101004Z DEC 08 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY DHAKA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7911
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE 0344
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEHRC/USDA FAS WASHDC IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS DHAKA 001276

AIDAC
SIPDIS

USDA FOR DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY/ETERPSTRA,
USDA FOR OFSO/JDEYER,
USDA FOR FAS/OA/MYOST/WKMILLER,
USDA FOR FAS/OCRA/CALEXANDER/JCARVER,
USDA FOR FAS/OSTA/CHAMILTON,
USDA FOR APHIS/MFLEMINGS/TBURLESON
SEOUL FOR APHIS/GEORGE ANDY BALL
DEPARTMENT FOR SA/PB, EB/TPP, AIAG HREED-ROWE
NEW DELHI FOR FAS FLAKE

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [KFLU](#) [EAGR](#) [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [CASC](#) [BG](#)
SUBJECT: PROMPT RESPONSE TO LATEST AVIAN INFLUENZA OUTBREAK

REF: DHAKA 1061

SUMMARY

¶1. An avian influenza outbreak at a poultry farm occurred in Rangpur District in northwestern Bangladesh November 28. Government of Bangladesh (GOB) authorities responded quickly, ordering birds culled within hours of the report and completing containment efforts within three days. The GOB reported the outbreak on its website a day after the Bangladesh National Reference Laboratory confirmed H5 avian influenza was the cause. The prompt response reflects a new commitment by both the GOB and poultry farmers to address avian influenza (AI), which will prove useful in the upcoming winter season, when AI incidents normally increase.

OUTBREAK AND SWIFT RESPONSE

¶2. The morning of November 28 a poultry farm in Rangpur District reported the unusual deaths overnight of 14 birds. Authorities immediately took samples from the farm to a nearby lab for rapid antigen testing. At 3:00 PM the lab reported the samples tested positive for Influenza A. At 5:00 PM the government ordered the culling of the remaining birds at the farm. That night authorities culled all 241 birds. The next day they destroyed all the eggs and litter, and by November 30 they had completely disinfected the farm. Within 72 hours of the initial deaths, containment operations were completed.

¶3. Late December 1, the Bangladesh National Reference Laboratory confirmed from the farm's samples that H5 avian influenza was the cause of the deaths. By the afternoon of December 2 the GOB had posted news of the outbreak on its website. The GOB will send samples to an international laboratory to determine the N type of the virus.

PUBLIC AWARENESS IMPROVING

¶4. Public awareness efforts contributed to the swift and prudent reporting by the farmer. The government compensation plan compensates only for culled birds, not dead ones. Farmers understand this approach. In fact, this prompted the farmer to report the initial deaths quickly, so as to ensure

greater compensation after the birds were culled. In this case, the farmer notified the livestock officer after only 14 birds, or about five percent of his stock, had died. In previous outbreaks, farmers often waited until 30% or more of their stocks had died before notifying authorities.

15. This is the second reported AI outbreak in Bangladesh since the summer lull (reftel). With the onset of winter, outbreaks of AI will likely become more frequent. The rapid and comprehensive response demonstrated by the GOB on this occasion will be vital in addressing future outbreaks, as will USG efforts to support increased surveillance and biosecurity on farms and at wet markets.

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